



Bourdieu in International Relations

Rethinking Key Concepts in IR

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Bourdieu in International Relations

Rethinking key concepts in IR

Edited by Rebecca Adler-Nissen

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Introduction

Bourdieu and International Relations theory

Rebecca Adler-Nissen

Why yet another dead French thinker? We already have Althusser, Foucault and Derrida. Does International Relations (IR) really need Pierre Bourdieu? The short answer is yes. The slightly longer answer is that Bourdieu's sociology provides us with an opportunity to rethink international politics in ways not offered by these other thinkers. Bourdieu helps us rediscover the everyday practices, symbolic structures and arenas of conflict that bring many other actors into perspective, rather than just focusing on nation states that produce (what we call) international politics. An engagement with his work redirects our discipline from being influenced by overly abstracted and simplified reifications of world politics, which is currently the case in both positivist and post-positivist IR schools. Bourdieu allows us to explore how people create international relations in their daily activities. In short, Bourdieu helps us to take the discursive, visual and embodied practices in international politics more seriously.

The purpose of this book is to rethink key concepts of IR by drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu. The last few years have seen a genuine wave of publications promoting sociology in international relations. Scholars have suggested that Bourdieu's vocabulary can be applied as an epistemological or a theoretical point of departure (Adler 2008; Guzzini 2000; Pouliot 2007; Williams 2007) or as an analytical approach to study security (Bigo 2002, 2005; Huysmans 2002; Leander 2005), diplomacy (Neumann 2002), foreign policy (Jackson 2008; Hopf 2002) or global environmental politics (Epstein 2008). Yet we still lack a systematic and accessible analysis of what Bourdieu-inspired IR might look like. This is where this volume makes a contribution. It offers an introduction to Bourdieu's thinking to a wider IR audience. The book challenges key assumptions, which currently structure IR scholarship, and provides a theoretical restatement of some of the core concepts in the field.

While political sociology is developing rapidly as a perspective in IR, there is a lack of general dialogue on the advantages and disadvantages of importing Bourdieu into IR. Contrary to the rich debate on Michel Foucault (e.g. Chandler 2010; Neumann and Sending 2007; Kirsey and Stokes, 2010; Merlingen 2006), Bourdieu is yet to be treated systematically in IR theory. The book contributes to the ongoing engagement with sociological ideas and methods within IR and, in particular, the study of practice.

This book brings together a select group of IR scholars who draw on both theoretical and empirical insights from Bourdieu. Each chapter covers one central concept in IR: *Methodology, Knowledges, Power, Strategy, Security, Culture, Gender, Norms, Sovereignty, Integration and Citizenship*. The chapters demonstrate how these concepts can be reinterpreted and used in new ways when exposed to Bourdieusian logic.

Theoretically, Bourdieu questions a number of assumptions in IR. Bourdieu dissolves the agency–structure problem in convenient, analytical units and offers an epistemological position representing what some have seen as a middle ground between objectivist and interpretative research traditions (Nash 1999). Moreover, Bourdieu's sociology offers multiple opportunities to reconsider the object(s) of IR theory, notably by 'de-institutionalizing' the state and focusing on historical struggles through which social distinctions are constituted. The increasing rate at which some states and societies are integrating on the one hand, and the drastic exclusions of other societies/states/social groups on the other, has created a need for deeper reflection on the social constitution of world politics.

For example, Bourdieu gives us imaginative ways of rethinking the development and nature of IR's core concept – the state. Bourdieu's reflection on the state's 'meta-capital', understood as a definitional power – capable of exercising control over other types of power such as educational status and military professionalism – provides us with a concrete way to analyse the interplay between the symbolic and material resources that contribute to state sovereignty. Contrary to the formalistic views on the state still dominant in IR theory, where sovereignty is an either/or concept with a series of pre-defined discursive or material attributes, Bourdieu does not accept the idea of the state being static. On the contrary, Bourdieu focuses on the historical processes and slow-changing cultural systems that make up, for instance, post-colonial Algeria or his native region of Béarn in the Pyrenees mountains of south-west France. At the same time, Bourdieu helps us to understand how non-state actors such as transnational movements challenge sovereignty by questioning the state's regalian functions.

By using key terms from Bourdieu's sociology such as *field, habitus, symbolic power, capital, doxa* and *reflexivity*, it is possible to map political units as spaces of practical knowledge on which diverse and often 'unconventional' agencies position themselves and therefore shape international politics. Thus, crucial questions of:

- how inclusion/exclusion lines are constituted;
- how social groups and institutions in world politics enact their practices of assimilation or distinction;
- which power mechanisms are at the disposition of the different actors; and
- how to observe the constitution, usage and change of political ideas through economic, cultural and social practices

can be answered in original ways with sensitivity to the everyday practices in world politics.

of IR scholars who draw on both. Each chapter covers one central power, *Strategy, Security, Culture, Citizenship*. The chapters demonstrate in new ways when exposed to

of assumptions in IR. Bourdieu's convenient, analytical units and offers some have seen as a middle ground between traditions (Nash 1999). Moreover, it tries to reconsider the object(s) of the state and focusing on historical constitution. The increasing rate at which, on the one hand, and the drastic changes on the other, has created a need for world politics.

ways of rethinking the development of Bourdieu's reflection on the state's power – capable of exercising control over status and military professionalism in the interplay between the symbolic and the sovereignty. Contrary to the IR theory, where sovereignty is an discursive or material attributes, it is static. On the contrary, Bourdieu is thinking cultural systems that make the region of Béarn in the Pyrenees area, Bourdieu helps us to understand the elements challenge sovereignty by

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This introductory chapter explains the general argument of the book. The next section considers the kind of exchange with the rest of the IR field that a Bourdieu-inspired research may offer. The second section provides a brief overview of how Bourdieu has so far been imported into IR studies. The third section explains the selection of concepts and how they illustrate the argument of the book. The fourth section explains the logic of the concept chapters. All chapters go through a three-step process of (1) rethinking a key concept in IR, based on a critical engagement with existing literature, (2) methodological considerations and empirical illustrations of the restated concept and (3) reflective turn, self-criticism and discussion of avenues for future research. The fifth and last section provides an overview of how the book is organised.

Bourdieu and international politics

By the time Bourdieu died of cancer in a Paris hospital in 2002, he had made a profound impact on social sciences. The son of a village postman, Bourdieu set new standards – not only in research on social class and poverty, but also in the study of media, language, literature, education, science, gender and political communication. In the mid-1970s, Bourdieu's major writings were translated into English and his books appeared in libraries outside of France – in the anthropology, sociology and philosophy sections. One area in which Bourdieu was almost ignored, however, was IR. This is perhaps not surprising. His own engagement with international politics seemed to be limited to his activities as a public intellectual. In his later years, Bourdieu championed the anti-globalisation movement and other anti-establishment causes in France (Swartz 2004). Moreover, he vigorously defended the European welfare state against what he saw as destructive neo-liberalism (see also Bourdieu 2002). However, Bourdieu was first and foremost a remarkable social theorist and empirical researcher. His productive career resulted in more than 25 books and hundreds of articles (for overviews of Bourdieu's work, see Swartz 1997; Jenkins 2002; Reed-Danahay 2004). It is in this capacity, more than as an engaged citizen (or what his critics would call an outdated 'anti-mondialiste'), that he will be most valuable to the further development of IR as a discipline.

Although one of his most important works, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), is an ethnographic exploration of Kabyle (also known as Berber) society in Algeria – including reflections on the legacy of French colonialism (see Guiraudon, this volume) – Bourdieu did not form his ideas on the empirical objects that are usually studied in IR. This is both a challenge and an opportunity for IR theory: Bourdieu largely focused on the domestic arenas of European societies, where the techniques of discipline and practices of government are disseminated by diverse institutions across the entire social framework. In the international arena, such techniques and practices are often more unevenly distributed. One central question raised in this book is therefore: Is there specificity to 'the international'? On the one hand, a Bourdieusian analysis enables us to see that the international order is produced in much the same way as the domestic order, i.e.

as a densely structured social space 'inhabited by all manner of discursive bodily and material relations' (Selby 2007: 338). On the other hand, Bourdieu also helps us to understand how the powerful distinction between 'inside' and 'outside' is upheld every day by everything from border guards to national statisticians and IR scholars. Indeed, if we are to promote Bourdieu to the international realm, we need to question and work our way through these and other specificities.

No matter what makes 'the international' stand out, Bourdieu manages to turn mainstream IR theory upside down. When neo-realists claim that the international system is anarchical, Bourdieu would insist that it is hierarchical. When the English School suggests that 'pariah states and failed states' can be seen as being somehow outside international society, relegated to a more abstract international system 'with less dense interaction' (Dunne 2010: 148), a Bourdieu-inspired approach argues that processes of exclusion are intrinsic to international society. Muammar Gaddafi's Libya, for instance, in part becomes a 'pariah state' through processes of labelling and discrimination by the Western world. To understand the international intervention in Libya in 2011, we need to link an analysis of the historical and economic relations between the European powers and North Africa with the struggles between diplomatic and military fields in the Western world, the UN and NATO (Adler-Nissen 2011a).

A political sociology such as Bourdieu's shares a view that all constructivists agree on: that world politics is socially constructed (see Guzzini 2000; Jackson 2008; Kauppi 2003; Leander 2005; Pouliot 2007).¹ This construction is seen as an ongoing, dynamic process; reality is reproduced through people acting on their interpretations and their knowledge of it. This is different from a constructivist focus on identity and norms, because it brings power into the picture (Guzzini, this volume). Drawing on Bourdieu's field concept, Michael C. Williams (2007), for instance, points at constructivist security scholars' failure to understand that culture and strategic action are linked. Consequently, constructivists naively saw NATO's transformation into a 'democratic security community' after the Cold War as a 'fact', a confirmation of their own theories, rather than as the ambiguous outcome of a particular power struggle. However, anarchy is not what states make of it because international politics is already structured. States come with a history. The marginalisation of some states, groups or individuals cannot be explained by processes of social interaction and role ascription, but by the changing patterns of cultural and symbolic forms of domination and the competition for power and prestige. Consequently, the idea that anarchy is a defining feature of 'the international' simply does not make sense in a Bourdieusian perspective.² Bourdieu would challenge, both philosophically and analytically, the key distinction between a domestic realm, which is ordered under a (legitimate) authority, and the international realm, which is unorganised and not bound by law. As Bourdieu demonstrated repeatedly, life *within* the state is also violent and conflict-ridden. This idea is perhaps most evident in his *magnum opus*, *The Weight of the World* (1993) – a book that documents various forms of violence and social suffering in contemporary Western (and particularly French) society. Bourdieu and his collaborators interview people who are living at the harsh end of society (in run-down housing

estates, on the dole, in part-time work, factory jobs, etc.) and let them tell their own stories of everyday humiliation, symbolic, verbal and physical violence. This violence does not exist due to a lack of organised community, but precisely as a direct result of it. The social (whether it is internationally or domestically organised) is characterised by continuous struggles for power and ways to legitimise domination. The rise of private security actors, for example, can be understood as the combined effect of at least two different processes: the punitive approach to crime since the 1970s, and the neo-liberal modes of government with privatisation and outsourcing of public sector security functions, 'including prisons, prisoner transport, immigration control, and airport security' (Abrahamsen and Williams 2011: 313). As Abrahamsen and Williams show in the case of South Africa, the rise of private security is not simply the result of the 'decline of the state'. Rather, what Bourdieu calls 'the symbolic power' of the public has been re-articulated, and a new partnership between the public and the private has been constructed with the help of diplomats of the foreign companies' state of origin, defending 'free trade' and foreign investment in all sectors, including security.

Contrary to conventional constructivists in IR, Bourdieu did not only focus on norm diffusion, and socialisation in the international system. He studied micro-sociological practices such as marriage, graduation and gift-giving rituals to understand how structures of symbolic power and exclusion are reproduced. Such rituals have been overlooked in much IR theory despite their importance in diplomacy and international negotiations. Compared to the existing versions of IR constructivism, which pay inadequate attention to the role of habitual and unreflective behaviour in world politics, one of the merits of a Bourdieusian approach is that it is particularly attentive towards these phenomena (see also Pouliot 2008).

While Bourdieu clearly speaks to constructivist IR and, in particular, 'the practice turn', he also has a lot to say to critical theorists who will pick up on his interpretations of domination and resistance. It is no coincidence that the volume *Critical Theorists and International Relations* (2010), edited by Jenny Edkins and Nick Vaughan-Williams, includes a chapter on Pierre Bourdieu. In this book, Bourdieu is featured alongside thinkers such as Karl Marx and Simone de Beauvoir, all 'questioning the starting point of thinking politically' (Edkins and Vaughan-Williams 2010: 2). It might be difficult to see how subjects can possibly counter the anonymous forces that inscribe themselves as deeply in the body as Bourdieu contends. However, Bourdieu acknowledges the possibility of a 'conscious control of the habitus' if only on the basis of a rigorous socio-analysis that brings the influence of the former 'out of the tacit background into the explicit foreground' (Hoy 2003: 123). Moreover, Bourdieu argued that sometimes bringing practices to consciousness can move beyond individual habitus and extends to collective awareness and action.¹ In other words, there is a critical, emancipatory trait in Bourdieu's thinking, which underlines the political in mobilisations of group or class struggle. The emphasis on the complex construction of collective consciousness – including the discursive moves that help constitute collective identities – moves us beyond a Gramscian notion of counter-hegemony, which is one of the favourite versions of 'resistance' in critical theory (Germain and Kenny 1998).

Unlike his philosopher compatriots, Pierre Bourdieu has had little influence on contemporary IR theory. In poststructuralist accounts, Bourdieu's sociology is often regarded as (class) deterministic, having little to offer to contemporary IR theories and debates. This is about to change; Bourdieu's work is now used to deploy, recast, criticise and extend key issues and impasses in contemporary IR theory. Poststructuralists engage with Bourdieu's understanding of the symbolic power of language (Neumann 2002; Epstein, this volume; Pouliot, this volume). Bourdieu developed a complex understanding of language, seeking to go beyond a Saussurian or Chomskyan analysis. Throughout his life, Bourdieu criticised poststructuralists such as Foucault and Derrida, who he thought reduced or even destroyed the social sciences 'without paying the price of genuine conversion to the constraints and demands of empirical research' (Bourdieu, quoted in Leander 2008: 605). In fact, this distancing was driven not only by theoretical disagreement, but also by a particular struggle in French academia in the 1970s over who was the main theorist of language (see Bourdieu's discussion of his relationship to Foucault, Bourdieu 2002: 88–94). Like Foucault, Bourdieu wanted to explore the political and social conditions of language formation (Bourdieu 1992: 2). For Bourdieu, and for poststructuralists, textual analysis is not enough. An internal analysis of political discourses or texts, which does not place them in the political field or wider social frame, is of limited value (see Fairclough 1998: 143).

The main tension between Bourdieu's work and poststructuralism is therefore not the emphasis on discourse, but rather *how* to study it. Foucault-inspired poststructuralists analyse discourses 'as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1972: 29).⁴ In contrast, Bourdieu approaches discourse sociologically, i.e. as linguistic interactions manifesting the participants' respective positions in social space and categories of understanding. Language is embedded in social hierarchies and in bodies. Particular accents, utterances and words may signal a person's social position. Language is part of distinction and classification games (Bourdieu 1992).

Bourdieu's attempt to go beyond both social determinism and performative agency in his interpretation of class and group struggles has also inspired feminist scholars. However, Bourdieu has always had a difficult relationship with feminists – perhaps because he did not acknowledge much of their work. A more substantial debate between Bourdieu and feminists has concentrated around Judith Butler's critique of Bourdieu's notion of habitus and body and what she calls 'his neglect of the possibility of discursive agency' (see Butler 1997: 157–159). Other feminists have argued that despite his attempt to address gendered social practices, Bourdieu still reproduces sexist dichotomies and 'misses the critical dimension of the public/private, male/female and culture/nature opposition and the contradictions in that condition' (McCall 1992: 852). However, in Jabri's reconstruction (this volume), Bourdieu's work provides an avenue to challenge binary oppositions inherent in gender symbolism. Here, Bourdieu's notion of reflexivity offers an opportunity to expose the gendered subtext of scientific practice.

Bourdieu, however, is not only likely to inspire a range of post-positivist theories in IR. There is a particular aspect to Bourdieu's method, which has the potential to

appeal to the entire field of IR, including liberal institutionalists and even some realists. A distinctive element in Bourdieu's approach is the construction of interpretations through direct interaction with the empirical world. This requires IR scholars to roll up their sleeves and do some empirical research themselves. If, in recent years, theory has been positioned as a superior form of IR compared to empirical analysis (Wallace 1996; Berling, this volume), Bourdieu has always stubbornly reacted to this. In *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power* (1989), for instance, Bourdieu presents a form of total anthropology, which surpasses the opposition between exploration and explanation, combining a range of methods, including interviews, statistics, auto-anthropology and participant observation. Moreover, it ignores some of the artificial oppositions structuring the social sciences – e.g. between quantitative and qualitative inquiry. *The State Nobility* analyses the practical taxonomies and activities, through which teachers and students collectively produce the French elite schools' everyday reality as a meaningful life world. Bourdieu argues that educational titles become a prerequisite for ascent to the apex of private corporations and public bureaucracies. The educational system, despite its formalised meritocracy, becomes a mode of domination whereby the ruling class maintains itself in France. Bourdieu insists that empirical analysis is crucial for our understanding of society and that myriad methods, including statistics, participant observations and interviews, are important in this respect.

A different reading of 'the international'

This book offers a different interpretation of 'the international', 'the state' and 'theory'. This section discusses these three insights and points out the potential for a more systematic use of his work in IR studies.

First, this book offers a different reading of 'the international' by focusing on social practices. When Bourdieu was first imported into IR in the 1980s, his sociology represented a critical stance vis-à-vis the established US-dominated IR. Bourdieu became a reference in a meta-theoretical debate between positivist theories and post-positivist theories of international relations (what some call the Fourth Great Debate).² This debate was concerned with the underlying epistemology of international relations scholarship and is also described as a debate between 'rationalists' and 'reflectivists' (Smith 2007: 10). Bourdieu helped question the choices of puzzles and research questions that were accepted as legitimate within IR (Bigo and Walker 2007: 728). 'Objective' structures such as the liberal market economy and the Cold War's bipolar system were in fact historical contingent effects of particular practices that excluded other ways of organising the world. Consequently, it was possible to question the realist worldview and demonstrate its arbitrariness. However, when making these arguments, most IR scholars did not make full use of Bourdieu's theoretical arsenal. His critical stance was an inspiration, but his analytical tools were not fully employed.

Later on, in the 1990s and 2000s, Bourdieu's work has been central to the emergence of the 'practice turn' in IR promoted by scholars such as Neumann (2002) and Adler and Pouliot (2011). Today, there is a notable increase of interest

in Bourdieu's work among IR scholars who have explored, among other issues, the relevance of his theory for security studies, European integration and migration studies and, more specifically, for the renewal of political sociological approaches that have been rather scarce since the 'linguistic turn' in IR. Contrary to the early pioneers, driven by a desire to demonstrate the problems of theory-construction, practice scholars use Bourdieu as a thinker who offers a useful analytical framework for studying concrete practices such as diplomacy. Neumann and Pouliot (2011), for instance, show how Russia's awkward relationship with the West over the last millennium can be explained neither by realist notions of systemic pressure, nor by constructivist ideas of socialisation of states. It is Bourdieu's notion of 'hysteresis', i.e. the mismatch between the dispositions Russian diplomats embody and the positions they occupy in the international society that explains the *longue durée* of Russian diplomacy vis-à-vis the West. What is picked up by the practice turn is not so much Bourdieu's insights on the production of knowledge, but rather his understanding of the mutually constituted relationship between social structure and social action. Instead of a simple relationship between the individual and society, Bourdieu substitutes the constructed relationship between habitus and field(s); i.e. between 'history incarnated in bodies' as dispositions and 'history objectified in things' in the form of systems of positions. 'The crucial aspect of this equation is "relationship between"', because neither habitus nor field has the capacity to unilaterally determine social action' (Wacquant 2006: 269).

Rather than trying to make Bourdieu's theory fit with one single IR theory, this book sees him as providing IR with a new orientation. Overall, Bourdieu moves us away from what we could call the 'asocial' ontology, which still dominates IR theory today. By 'asocial', I mean IR theory that continues to ignore that social relations, including international relations, are realised and produced by people such as UN officials, management consultants, Libyan refugees and Ugandan child soldiers.

Moreover, despite insights from various strands of constructivism (Checkel 2005), feminism (Cohn 2006) and post-structuralism (Weber 1995; Hansen 2006) as well as foreign policy analysis (Hudson 2005) and diplomatic studies (Neumann 2002), IR's research objects and methods are too often already defined *before* the actual analytical process. However, part of the research process is to construct the research object (Bourdieu *et al.* 1991). We can benefit from Bourdieu's method of talking to actors to see what they actually do, think, etc., rather than simply impose a rational actor view that assumes that they follow the interests as rationalism defines them. The social cannot be understood 'as an external law, set of rules or representations which the subject will somehow blindly follow, learn or incorporate, since ... the social will always be literally incorporated in the subject' (Adkins 2004: 10). The theorisation of social action as always embodied implies that to be effective, power and hence politics are incorporated into the body. In summary, this book seeks to further develop a practice-oriented IR and to broaden our understanding of 'the international'.

The second general insight that this book brings to IR is a rethinking of the state. At the end of the 1980s, Ashley showed that sovereignty was a prerequisite for

gaining acceptance in the IR theory: 'It is what one must do in order internationally to be' (Ashley 1989: 257, quoted by Berling forthcoming). Indeed, Bourdieu reminds us that a word such as the 'state' is not just a description, it is also a prescription. The state imposes mental categories, which makes the actions of the state appear natural. When we act on behalf of the state – through delegation – we perform an act of magic that enables a collection of individuals to form a corporate body that transcends individuals in significance and purpose (Swartz 1997: 150). By emphasising magic, Bourdieu helps us understand the (continued) symbolic power of the state.

However, IR scholars can also use Bourdieu to study challenges to state sovereignty. A Bourdieu-inspired approach involves tackling the way sovereign claims are affected by rather non-spectacular or pragmatic concerns. It focuses on how sovereign claims are handled concretely and influenced by tacit understandings of legitimate and appropriate action in particular social contexts, be they in NATO (Pouliot 2010) or in Islamist terrorist networks (Williams, this volume). Such analyses make it possible to explore how various groups of state professionals perform as both theorists of the state and as 'agents of transformation'. Security scholars, for instance, have argued that the state is no longer the dominant organiser of capital: it no longer constitutes the unquestioned meta-field with 'universal currency'. A field of European 'insecurity professionals' has developed with a high degree of hegemony over European security knowledge (Bigo 2002: 64). According to Bigo and his collaborators, intelligence and border control is constructed through a range of often routinised and transnational practices (Bigo, this volume, 2002; Bigo and Guild 2005; Huysmans 2002, 2006).

Finally, Bourdieu is useful to those who study developments that lead to transnational politics, which are not confined to one nation state either in their origins or in their effects. Take the example of migration. The movement of people across state borders in recent years, especially from developing to developed countries, and between developing countries, has had a significant effect on international relations. Yet IR scholars have been struggling to fully grasp the processes of migration, whether they take place in the Middle East, India or across the US-Mexican border (Heisler 2001). IR theorists tend to think of actors in international politics as only states or state representatives, as if these people did not change identity or roles (or worse: as if national identity were the only form of identity worth mentioning). However, people move – voluntarily or involuntarily – across borders, and migration is not likely to leave them unaffected. During migration, as in many other transnational processes, the state is no longer the structuring and dominant 'actor', as is the case of much IR theory. It is the transnational field, which structures particular representations (e.g. Dezalay and Garth 1995, 2002). Some migration scholars use Bourdieu's field theory to describe migrants as people who neither belong completely to their home state nor are totally assimilated into the new state (Lewitt and Schiller 2004: 1010).

It is not only migrants, but also migration managers, who can be analysed from a transnational field perspective. This view has been taken up by Virginie Guiraudon (2003, this volume) in her studies of migration and asylum politics in France and

the rest of Europe. While national control and authority may still be important concerns, international cooperation on migration issues intensified dramatically in less than two decades. In this way, illicit and controversial ways of handling migrants dodge the radar of democratic and parliamentary control in the nation states, while allowing the very same states to continue their practices of extradition and exclusion of unwanted foreigners.

In summary, Bourdieu can be used to analyse both the continuation of and the reconfiguration of state power. If we are to fully understand transnational phenomena such as the Arab Spring, Islamist terrorist networks, the global animal rights movement or the power of organisations such as the UN, NATO and the EU, we must look at those forces that produce and perform them. The methods used for exploring such dynamics are manifold. They reflect Bourdieu's multi-method approach (Pouliot, this volume). For instance, Peter Jackson (2008) builds on archival material to study the French foreign service and the production of representatives of a sovereign France. Frédéric Mérand (2006, 2008, 2010) uses in-depth interviews to understand the European Security and Defence Policy as a symptom of the transformation of the European nation state in the twenty-first century.

This understanding of the state has consequences for our understanding of the so-called 'level-of-analysis' problem in IR. When David Singer suggested that a clear choice of level-of-analysis between state and system could lead to better prediction and 'greater theoretical growth in the study of international relations' (Singer 1961: 89), he did a lot of damage to IR. Following Bourdieu, we should seek to overcome these artificial theoretical constructs of 'levels'. Similarly, Waltz's famous three images (individual, state, system) should be supplemented by concepts such as 'group' and 'class'. To summarise, Bourdieu (with his view of the state) provides fruitful insights to both scholars who consider the state to remain the most important actor in international relations, and to those who believe in the 'eclipse of the state'.

The third major insight from Bourdieu is an analysis of the production of (scientific) knowledge. Bourdieu would probably have shared Hedley Bull's criticism of the scientific approach to international relations. Bull warned against their 'uncritical attitude toward their own assumptions, and especially toward the moral and political attitudes that have a central but unacknowledged position in much of what they say' (Bull 1966: 375). Bourdieu would have agreed with Bull that IR scholars lack 'reflexivity'.

Knowledge – including academic knowledge – is inherently political. The sociologist, according to Bourdieu, must engage in a 'sociology of sociology' so as not to unwittingly attribute to the object of observation, the characteristics of the subject. Reflexivity is, therefore, a kind of additional stage in the scientific epistemology. For example, the whole idea that 'the international' should be seen as the specific object of analysis, requiring a specific methodology, or at least a specific range of methodologies, is problematic. Indeed, one of Bourdieu's trademarks was his insistence not only on critical self-investigation of the author's own position, but also of a continuous critique of the discipline of academic

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– is inherently political. The in a 'sociology of sociology' so servation, the characteristics of dditional stage in the scientific he international' should be seen cific methodology, or at least a ic. Indeed, one of Bourdieu's self-investigation of the author's of the discipline of academic

disciplines as such. Bourdieu writes: 'The intellectual world, which believes itself so profoundly liberated from conformity and convention, has always seemed to me as inhabited by conformities, that acted upon me as repulsive forces' (Bourdieu 2004, quoted in Reed-Danahay 2004: 1).

Reflexivity also implies that the very object of analysis is the production of IR theories and the people that produce them. In recent years, Bourdieu-inspired thinking has promoted a (strikingly delayed) debate on the self-legitimising and co-constituting practices of European integration studies (Kauppi, this volume). Lawyers, in particular, have begun to question the normative assumptions on which most EU research is constructed (Walker 2003: 12–13). It appears as though many EU scholars are guided not just by analytical considerations and positivist legal methods, but also by a particular (self-)understanding or normative concern for the *telos* of the integrative process and the EU's own claims to supreme authority (Adler-Nissen 2011b; Madsen 2011). It is perhaps this specific aspect of Bourdieu's social theory, the possibility for critical reflexivity, that has the most potential to bring forward IR studies. Bourdieu helps IR researchers move away from the self-legitimising and descriptive accounts of international institutions and organisations, to a more sociologically informed analysis.

As this book will show, a Bourdieusian analysis does not demand a particular kind of operationalisation:

it does not and cannot – if it is to remain consistent with itself – provide firm guidelines for what exactly should be studied, what kind of evidence is relevant and in what kind of quantities for a study. To be consistent with itself, it has to remain firm on the view that the answer to these questions is contextual and question related.

(Leander 2006: 11AQ; see also Leander 2002a: 11–12)

Indeed, the uniting theme that characterises the contributions to this book is a scepticism towards the whole idea of a grand theory of international politics. Instead, they insist on the messiness of the world, which should not be reduced on the altar of simplicity (see also Leander 2010).

To sum up, Bourdieu helps IR scholars move towards a theoretically informed empirical sociology. In particular, Bourdieu's metaphoric model of social space, in which human beings embody and carry with them different capitals, can pave the way for new types of analyses of otherwise understudied aspects of international relations. Moreover, Bourdieu's reflexivity provides IR scholars with a way of critically examining the positions from which they themselves and their colleagues speak.

Rethinking key concepts in IR

Because this book is located firmly within the field of IR, our point of departure is not Bourdieu's own conceptual universe. Instead, we begin with a selection of key notions in IR, which we then submit to a Bourdieusian reinterpretation. The reason

for this approach is that this book was born out of IR scholars' actual experiences with difficulties in coming to terms with questions of, for example, power, security and norms. Indeed, this book was not born out of a wish to idolise Bourdieu. We start out from the existing conceptual universe of current IR. Consequently, the chapters in the book do not begin by introducing one of Bourdieu's own concepts such as *field*, *capital* and *habitus*. Instead, they start with the problems faced by IR scholars who struggle with the concepts as they are currently used. Charlotte Epstein, for instance, begins with a review of the constructivist literature on norms, concluding that it has neglected 'structural power of an immaterial kind' and is too 'agent-centric'. This is then her point of departure for using Bourdieu's concept of *nomos* to show how anti-whaling activists effectively succeeded in re-ordering the global whaling order by changing the way in which whaling practices are categorised. The result of this rethinking of norms is a wholly different way of analysing the normative in international politics and specifically the dynamics of international politics of whaling. This inevitably means a particular IR-oriented *translation* of Bourdieu. With each chapter, we try to reveal the richness of Bourdieu's thought, but in our reinterpretations we pick and choose from Bourdieu's writings.

While the book is engaged with key concepts, we do not analyse why or how these concepts have become so central to IR. We do not, in other words, embark on a genealogy of, for example, security. Instead, this book questions the a priori definition of concepts. Our shared point of departure is that IR scholars often treat concepts as the foundations on which theoretical or empirical contributions are based, but seldom as objects warranting critical examination in their own rights. The contributors demonstrate how these often abstract units of meaning could be rethought, specified and operationalised differently, opening up different kinds of analysis.

The concepts cover a wide range of the IR field. Of course, the selection is by no means exhaustive. It is impossible to cover all topics and concepts in IR within one book. Instead, we have chosen concepts which have generated considerable theoretical debate over the years. This explains why broader concepts such as 'security' have been chosen over more specific ones such as 'proliferation'. 'Security' is a broad conceptual frame for a number of debates ranging from issues such as nuclear weapons proliferation and the use of threats of military retaliation to the growth of radical Islamist terrorism. In the selection process, the book also takes into account concepts where Bourdieu's thoughts are most obviously applicable.

One reader might find that an analysis of international law or human rights is missing. Another reader might have wanted a chapter on globalisation or post-colonialism. Parts of the international law debate are covered in the chapters on 'Sovereignty', 'Integration' and 'Citizenship'; see also Madsen (2011) for a Bourdieusian analysis of human rights. Elements of the globalisation debate will be analysed in the chapter on 'Integration'. A notion such as 'interest' is covered in the chapters on 'Culture', 'Strategy' and 'Norms'. Readers are advised to look at the comprehensive index at the end of the book for specific concepts.

For readers interested in international political economy, there are already many useful introductions to Bourdieu (see Leander 2002a, 2002b, 2005; Shapiro 2002). Moreover, Angus Cameron and Ronen Palan (1999: 268) draw on Bourdieu (and Foucault) to demonstrate 'the imagined economy' and processes of globalisation and transformation of statehood. Dezalay and Garth (2002) offer an analysis of transnational global elites, looking at competition among lawyers and economists involved in state-building processes in Latin America.

The primary aim of this book is not to advocate a particular interpretation of Bourdieu, or to go systematically through his entire oeuvre. On the contrary, the focus is to explore how IR scholars may use Bourdieu, and the problems inherent in translating Bourdieu into the discipline of IR and the practical field of international politics. To summarise, this volume does not offer an orthodox reading of Bourdieu. Instead, readers can use this book as a source of inspiration for further (critical) engagement with the work of Bourdieu and, more generally, political sociology.

Three steps: reconceptualisation, illustration and self-critique

Each chapter in this book makes three contributions to rethinking core concepts and ideas in IR. First, the chapters discuss various ways of defining the concept, i.e. power within existing IR theory, and demonstrate how the concept can be fruitfully restated by carefully introducing ideas from Bourdieu. One challenge, as mentioned earlier, lies in the fact that the empirical objects for which Bourdieu forged his concepts did not generally transcend traditional national boundaries. Another challenge is that while Bourdieu presents an elaborated social theory, it is awash with ambiguities and thus in need of theoretical clarification and translation (see Pouliot and Mérand, this volume). The contributors cope with these ambiguities by employing the Bourdieusian vocabulary as a 'thinking tool' (Leander 2008), which allows for a certain perspective, but needs to be developed further and adjusted to the needs of situated research contexts. IR scholars (e.g. Jackson 2008; Williams 2007; Leander 2006) rightfully note that, for instance, the *field* is a fuzzy term and has never been fully explicated by Bourdieu. It remains confusing when and how a field can be identified, how different fields (such as national and transnational ones) relate to each other and if the existence of meta-fields (in the national frame, the political field) can be assumed in international relations (Jackson 2008). The chapters therefore discuss the analytical advantages and limitations of the restated IR concept. The individual chapters also engage with the various criticisms of Bourdieu's work not only made within IR, but also in sociology and the social sciences more generally.

Second, through this process of reinterpretation, the contributors show how this restated concept may be employed in concrete empirical analyses and they discuss the methodological problems of drawing from Bourdieu in this respect. Apart from serving as concrete illustrations of how one can use Bourdieu in IR, the brief case studies also have the advantage of encouraging IR scholars to follow Bourdieu's methodological dictum of constructing their interpretations in direct interaction

with an empirical case. Methodological questions are intrinsic to the discussion of what a Bourdieusian approach brings to IR and to the rethinking of a particular concept. This includes both meta-theoretical discussions about the nature of social science, but also more specific questions of how to put his theory into practice. The book covers a wide range of cases, including NATO, military strategy, gender, terrorism, migration, citizenship and regional integration.

Third, and in accordance with the Bourdieusian call for auto-socioanalysis, the chapters make a self-reflective move by engaging in a critical discussion of their own rethinking of the concept. For instance, with their various usages of Bourdieusian vocabulary, IR scholars have tended to read the structuralism side of Bourdieu.⁶ This is perhaps not surprising, given IR's structuralism currents from neo-realism to Wendtian constructivism. Following the structural Bourdieu, however, creates the problem that change and contingency of any social order fall easily out of sight. Consequently, there is the risk of losing the main advantages of the recent 'turn to practice' in IR. The chapters discuss the blind spots and the kind of questions which risk being silenced if one draws uncritically from Bourdieu's social theory.

To summarise, the book offers more than a simple restatement of the thoughts of Bourdieu. Together, the chapters contribute to a general rethinking of IR theory and research. More specifically, the book offers an international political sociology, which challenges the core ideas around which the field of IR is (still) rotating. The book demonstrates the importance of a continued elaboration of sociological and reflexive perspectives within the study of international relations. The organisation of the book into short essays, with titles that encapsulate central terms in IR, should enhance reader accessibility and comprehension. The book can thus be conceived either as a guidebook that one could read in its entirety to grasp the extensive implications of Bourdieu's thinking for IR or, alternatively, as a volume to draw upon selectively when faced with common and difficult topics in IR, such as power, sovereignty and norms.

The organisation of the volume

The book is divided into two parts. The first part introduces Bourdieu and his most important ideas to a wider IR audience. The second part subjects key IR concepts to a Bourdieusian reinterpretation.

The first part opens with an essay by Vincent Pouliot and Frédéric Mérand, presenting the main elements in Pierre Bourdieu's theory, with emphasis on its application in studies of international politics. For the uninitiated reader this may be a good way to become acquainted with Bourdieu's conceptual universe. For the reader already familiar with Bourdieu, the chapter is also interesting because it identifies six contributions that a Bourdieusian approach can make: at the meta-theoretical level, such an approach would be characterised by a reflexive epistemology, a relational ontology and a theory of practice – three dimensions that address key theoretical debates in IR. On a more applied level, Bourdieu's sociology enables us to study world politics as a complex of 'embedded social

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fields'. to open up the state's field of power, and to factor in the symbolic nature
of power.

The issue of how to do IR is analysed further in the subsequent chapter
'Methodology' by Vincent Pouliot. He finds that one of the most important insights
that Bourdieu passed to social scientists is the notion that 'the social' tends to
deposit itself in two main forms: in bodies (*habitus*) as well as in things (*fields*).
The task of IR and international political sociology, from this outlook, primarily
consists of capturing the dual character of practical logics. A key methodological
requirement is to craft research designs that can both map the space of positions
in the field under study and capture the space of position-takings therein. In the
actual practice of research, however, this rather simple approach comes with a
variety of challenges. How does one strike the right balance between focusing
on the objectified forces of the field and recovering the subjective inclinations
of *habitus*? The chapter reflects on the merits and limits of using a variety of
methods, including descriptive statistics, discourse analysis, qualitative interviews,
focus groups and process-tracing, to explain the sense of one's place in international
organisations.

In the final contribution to the first part, titled 'Knowledges', Trine Villumsen
Berling explores the role of the IR researcher and of research practices. She argues
that scientific knowledge in international relations has generally focused on
an epistemological distinction between rationalism and relativism over the last
25 years. Berling explains that this division has created a problematic double
distinction between theory/reality and theory/practice, which works as a ghost
distinction in structuring IR research. While post-positivists have emphasised
the impossibility of detached, objective knowledge production through a
dissolution of the theory/reality distinction, the theory/practice distinction has
been left largely untouched by both post-positivism and positivism. Bourdieu,
on the contrary, lets the challenge to the theory/reality distinction spill over into
a challenge to the theory/practice distinction by thrusting the scientist into the
foreground as not just a factor (discourse/genre), but as an actor. In this way,
studies of IR need to include a focus on the interrelationship between theory and
practice in specific domains. The transformation of European security in the 1990s
is taken as an example.

In the second part, the contributors illustrate further the value of a Bourdieu-
inspired approach to IR. In the chapter on 'Power', Stefano Guzzini shows how
Bourdieu's framework of power analysis can be used to keep a wider con-
ceptualisation of power ('Lukes-plus-Foucault'), and yet overcome a series of
fallacies and problems that analyses of power in IR have encountered beforehand.
More specifically, Guzzini demonstrates that such a framework can accommodate
both the practice turn (in its handling of the agency-structure divide), and the
linguistic turn in the social sciences – centrally including the performative analysis
of power. Yet, at the same time, the transfer of this approach to the study of an
international power elite is marred by a series of difficulties, including the question
of whether such an elite can ever be circumscribed in the first place. Finally,
Bourdieu's approach is not a guarantee for a fruitful meeting between political

theory (governance, order and the 'political') and social theory (power, modes of 'domination').

Frédéric Mérand and Amélie Forget reinterpret the concept of 'Strategy', which is perhaps the oldest concept in IR. First applied to the conduct of war, strategy is now widely used to describe human behaviour in economics, political science, business and sociology. The rationalist assumptions of military strategy have spread to these fields of social inquiry. Game theory and rational choice theory, for instance, find their roots in Cold War strategic studies. This chapter borrows from Bourdieu's analysis of how social agents strategise (the practice) about military strategy (the concept). For Bourdieu, a strategy is the practice of trying to reproduce one's position in a social field. Neither intentional nor fully determined, strategy comes from a sense of the game that is generated by one's habitus. In contrast to dominant understandings of strategy in rational choice theory or strategic studies, Bourdieu's anthropological conceptualisation is not a consequentialist one. It focuses on the struggles of position and position-takings in agonistic social fields. In this perspective, we should expect the military strategy of a country to reflect and reinforce the views of those who dominate the military-intellectual field for cultural, social or political reasons. We should also expect that challengers are able to promote alternative doctrines only when the field is subject to an external shock, for example military defeat. This argument is illustrated with a case study of military strategists in Canada, which explores its implications beyond military doctrine.

Didier Bigo develops an international political sociology of 'Security'. Generally, IR literature, claiming to be pragmatist, positivist or realist, ignores the diversity of practices labelled as security. Their search for a definition of security (as good) opposed to insecurity (as bad) often accepts the position of the dominant speaker. The study of security, however, is done in the interest of someone. The confusion between security, national interest and reason of state continues to structure the theoretical narrative. This makes it difficult to address the web of security institutions that have developed beyond national borders. For instance, as policing at a distance has disentangled security from state sovereignty, security is now tackled at the transnational level, generating competition among professionals of politics and (in)security over the existence of threats and legitimate answers to them. Moreover, the role of technology, especially concerning information exchange, has reinforced the importance of security professionals. The chapter claims that security is too often reduced to an international relations problem disconnected from other bodies of knowledge. Security practices are collective and historic acts, and have shaped the evolution of the fundamental distinction that used to define the field of IR: internal vs. external security. The challenge for IR scholars, however, is to move beyond such divides and to create a new space for thought and discussion which takes everyday practices of security seriously.

Michael C. Williams' chapter rethinks 'Culture' through an analysis of global terrorist networks. This chapter provides a brief survey of some of the core components of Bourdieu's cultural analysis, focusing particularly on the 'production

of belief' and the operation of symbolic and cultural power by looking specifically at the concept of charisma. The chapter explores how Bourdieu's insights may be applied to the question of global terrorist networks, such as Al Qaeda. To this end, three elements of Bourdieu's understanding of charisma and political culture are central – what he calls the: 'work of enunciation', the 'mystery of the Ministry' and a leadership strategy based around the 'oracle effect'. The chapter concludes with an assessment of how these concepts may help in understanding the role of violence as a symbolic action in a world of 'scopic media', characteristic of Al Qaeda.

Vivienne Jabri opens her chapter on 'Gender' with an analysis of Bourdieu's *Masculine Domination* (2001). This book was a statement on what he refers to as the 'phallogocentric vision of the world' – the inscription upon the body of relations of power enacted through the socially constructed category of gender. For Bourdieu, a gender habitus permeates social life and impacts upon 'symbolic capital' as this is manifested in different contexts and fields. While gender, like class and race, may be considered as a 'generalised' social field, it has enormous significance in the specificities and distinctions of particular fields. The aim in this chapter is not so much to 'appropriate' Bourdieu for feminist purposes in IR, but to explore the issues of gender, agency and subjectivity as these relate to the specificities of 'the international'. While it is all too easy to 'mainstream' gender in Bourdieu, the more challenging prospect is in taking the distinctiveness of 'the international' seriously. The chapter takes up this challenge by focusing, in particular, on the gendering impact of 'the international' and its differential imprint upon bodies and populations. Where the focus might, at first hand, appear to be gender, the chapter argues that, in the context of 'the international', the process of 'gendering' might best be conceptualised in terms of race, or more accurately, racialisation.

Charlotte Epstein takes stock of the central role 'Norms' has played in developing constructivism's empirical research agenda. She shows that two decades of norms research has revealed a highly agentic approach to norms, appraised as capabilities that enable actors to 'do things'. The chapter then contrasts this with an understanding of the normative as an underlying order that both enables and constrains actors' interactions, as encapsulated by Bourdieu's 'nomos'. The international politics of whaling illustrates the concept's empirical reach. 'Nomos' captures the de-normalisation of whaling and the ways in which the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was fundamentally re-ordered from a 'society of whaling states' to 'a society of anti-whaling states'. Ultimately what 'nomos' draws out in a way that norms do not, is a fundamental and persistent 'desire to belong' underpinning actor behaviour. As the case of some whaling states illustrates, such desire to belong can in fact override considerations of selfish interest-maximisation, to the extent that the actors can be led to act against their material interests for the sake of continuing to belong to that particular social field, because of the ways in which it defines them. This has two significant consequences for the study of interests and identities, two key constructivist concerns. First, it draws out the extent to which the normative order is constitutive of the actor's identities, and

therefore its understanding of its interests. Second, it emphasises a collective, social dimension to interest formation that moves beyond the individualistic understanding of interests that still prevails within constructivist scholarship.

Rebecca Adler-Nissen takes issue with the IR theory's obsession with 'Sovereignty' in her chapter. Sovereignty is not merely constitutive of the inside/outside divide, it is also part of the daily struggles to monopolise legitimate symbolic power. Bourdieu argued that sovereignty implies that the state has pre-eminence over other areas of society: it has 'meta-capital'. Importing this insight into IR implies, somewhat paradoxically, that the state is understood in relative terms. The question then becomes: how does state sovereignty play out in relation to other articulations of authority in the world? This is illustrated through an analysis of competing articulations of political authority, focusing on the EU's new diplomatic service, which challenges the very idea of a national interest. Overlapping claims to authority involves rivalry to represent 'the people'. In the struggle to shape structures of perception and cognition, sovereignty refers both to a set of institutions and to the state's embodiment or what Bourdieu called 'minds of state'. This understanding has the potential to provide a rather more nuanced account of variations in authority and statehood than the languages of, for example, 'world community' or 'post-sovereignty'.

Niilo Kauppi proposes a structural constructivist conception of regional 'Integration'. This perspective has the potential to provide us with a multifaceted picture of integration that challenges intergovernmentalist, neofunctionalist and social constructivist accounts. Building on a study of the European integration process, with particular focus on the European Parliament, the chapter argues that one of the theoretical advantages of this alternative account of integration is that it does not force the scholar to choose between state-centric and supranational visions of EU politics or between rationality and identity. As a central concept in sociology, political science, international relations and European studies, integration is conspicuously missing in Bourdieu's work. Several reasons can explain this. First, sociology integration is a concept developed by functionalist theorists such as Durkheim and Parsons. Second, Bourdieu's ambition of creating his own distinctive social theory prevented him from adapting concepts that he considered unnecessary. Third, in the French context integration is a politically loaded term (republican integration). Fourth, and most importantly for this chapter, integration refers to a consensus model of society, whereas Bourdieu is a proponent of a conflict model of society. In its widest sense, integration refers to the formation of social groups and power through political struggles and alliances that aim to define the legitimate principles of social domination. Integration always involves exclusion. The dialectical interaction between consensus and conflict as a key dimension of regional integration and exclusion has until now been insufficiently analysed. IR scholars have concentrated on political conflict, neglecting analysis of consensus (and topics such as negotiation and compromise) as a condition of possibility of socially organised physical and symbolic conflict.

In the final chapter, Virginie Guiraudon addresses the ways in which IR scholars have taken up the issue of 'Citizenship'. Using immigration policy as a way to

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